

# PROTECT YOUR STRONGEST WEAPON



DEFENSE CENTERS  
OF EXCELLENCE

For Psychological Health  
& Traumatic Brain Injury



## HEADS UP: FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CONCUSSION



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March 2010



## Agenda

- **A Concussion is a Brain Injury**
- **Report It**
- **Get Checked Out**
- **Rest**
- **Return to Duty**

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## #1

# A CONCUSSION IS A BRAIN INJURY

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## **A Concussion is a Brain Injury:**

- Concussion is also known as a mild traumatic brain injury
- In many cases a concussion can be prevented or chances of a more severe brain injury reduced
- Caused by a blow or jolt to the head
- In combat zones, the leading cause is blast and its associated effects
  - Exposure to the blast wave
  - Potential injury from flying debris or fragments
  - Collision with objects after being thrown by the explosion
- Can temporarily change the way your brain works
- Can occur even if you haven't been knocked out



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## #2

## REPORT IT

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## Report It:

- If you felt
  - Dazed and/or confused
  - Disoriented
  - Dizzy, saw stars
- If you lost consciousness

- If you felt guilty  
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## Report It:

*It's still important to report it even if you don't have symptoms*

- If you sustained a blow or jolt to the head
- If you hit your head
- If you were exposed to a blast
- If you were in a vehicle that sustained damage

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## #3

# GET CHECKED OUT

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## Get Checked Out:

- Go to medical
  - Medic/Corpsman
  - Nurse
  - Nurse Practitioner (NP)
  - Physician Assistant (PA)
  - Physician (MD)
- Health care providers are the only ones who can determine if you have had a concussion



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## #4

## REST

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## Rest:

*After a concussion, in general:*

- Allow for plenty of sleep at night
- Maximize downtime during the day
- Return to normal activities gradually
- Until you are better, avoid activities such as contact or recreational sports or other activities that might put you at risk for another concussion

*\*Your health care provider will give you specific instructions if*

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## #5

# RETURN TO DUTY

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## Return to Duty:

- Symptoms of concussion almost always improve over 1 to 3 months
- Majority of symptoms resolve within hours to days



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The cost of a nursing education = \$100K

Training for an International Health Specialist = \$225K

The cost of a Kevlar helmet = \$975.00

Wearing your helmet backwards in a combat zone.....

PRICELESS!





## RESOURCES

- Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury [www.dcoe.health.mil](http://www.dcoe.health.mil)
- Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center [www.dvbic.org](http://www.dvbic.org)
- Center for Medical Education and Multimedia [www.traumaticbraininjuryatoz.org](http://www.traumaticbraininjuryatoz.org)

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## QUESTIONS?

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